

# Fiscal Note

*Fiscal Services Division*



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**SF 406** – Mental Health, Judicial Workgroup Recommendations (LSB 1064SV)  
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## **Description**

**Senate File 406** establishes an Office of Mental Health Advocate in the Department of Human Rights (DHR) and specifies duties for the administrator of the office. A transition provision directs the DHR to commence organizational activities during FY 2013-2014 as necessary to fully implement the new departmental office and all of this Bill's provisions on July 1, 2014.

This Bill requires the Clerk of the District Court or the clerk's designee to inform the interested person that intends to file an application for involuntary commitment about the option of requesting a preapplication screening assessment through a preapplication screening assessment program, if available.

This Bill also combines the application for involuntary commitment with treatment of persons with a substance-related disorder under the Iowa Code so an individual can fill out one application for an [Iowa Code chapter 125](#) or [229](#) commitment.

Further, this Bill requires the Department of Human Services to conduct a study regarding the possible development of a hospital bed tracking system in order to most efficiently and effectively serve the needs of persons suffering from mental illness. The department is required to submit a report of the study and make recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 16, 2013.

## **Background**

According to information provided by the Eighth District Court Administrators, there are approximately 41 mental health patient advocates working both full and part-time and many serve more than one county. Salaries and benefit packages vary greatly, with most salaries ranging from \$15-\$20 per hour.

## **Assumptions**

- In FY 2014, there will be one office administrator FTE and one administrative assistant hired for the Office of Mental Health Advocate.
- In FY 2015, the DHR will hire 30 social workers or equivalent positions to serve as Mental Health Advocates and one additional supervisor to supervise the social workers and assist with training and other duties of the office.
- There will be some one-time office startup costs the first year and ongoing expenses for office space and other administrative costs.
- The benefits packages and employment history are unknown for the current mental health advocates so the savings to the counties and the additional cost to the state to fund accrued

vacation, accrued sick leave, or benefits related to longevity of service cannot be estimated at this time.

### **Fiscal Impact**

Senate File 406 is estimated to cost the state \$223,000 in FY 2014 and \$2.1 million in FY 2015. There will likely be additional costs related to vacation, accrued sick leave, or benefits related to longevity of service as current mental health advocates are transitioned to State employees but without additional information those costs cannot be estimated. Cost details are listed in the chart below:

<b>Position</b>	<b>FTE's</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>
Office Administrator	1	\$ 98,175
Administrative Assistant	1	49,452
Start-up Cost/Admin Costs		75,000
		<b>\$ 222,627</b>
<b>Position</b>		<b>FY 2015</b>
Office Administrator	1	\$ 98,175
Administrative Assistant	1	49,452
Social Worker Supervisor	1	68,821
Social Worker	30	1,658,250
Office/Admin Costs		200,000
		<b>\$ 2,074,698</b>

### **Sources**

Judicial Branch  
Department of Inspections and Appeals  
LSA Analysis

/s/ Holly M. Lyons

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The fiscal note for this bill was prepared pursuant to [Joint Rule 17](#) and the Iowa Code. Data used in developing this fiscal note is available from the Fiscal Services Division of the Legislative Services Agency upon request.

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